



Becoming a Director

What are the benefits to being a Director?

As a Director, you play a leading role in the only independent, national parents' membership organisation in Scotland. You have the opportunity to influence policy development for the good of all Scotland's children.

And because we are in regular contact with the Scottish Government and a number of other organisations like Education Scotland and the Scottish Qualifications Authority, we are often involved in developments at an early stage.

We are invited to send directors to events and meetings on topics relevant to education, to join TV and radio audiences and to be interviewed. We also have the opportunity to put our views directly to MSPs, the Parliamentary Education Committee and to Ministers.

Why should you become a Director?

Because you are vital to us, so that we can carry on providing a unique service. We need you to ensure we hear and understand our membership, to inform our discussions and help us make policy.

Connect (a trading name of Scottish Parent Teacher Council) is the only organisation in Scotland to provide independent, parent-friendly advice and information to any parent of a school pupil. We also offer a parental perspective to policy makers and media: it's a unique organisation and directors have a unique role in it.

The day-to-day work of the organisation is carried out by the staff in our Edinburgh office and around the country, but directors have a significant part to play.

Who can be a Director?

The majority of Directors are nominated by their Parent Council or PTA, but they do not represent their school organisations on the Board. (We have both parent and teacher directors, plus a small number are appointed because they bring with them specific business skills that we need).

Within our company/charity, Directors work to and for Scottish Parent Teacher Council. Directors are expected to take an overall view of children's education, informed by their

own experience as a parent and/or teacher, but not representing any particular group or interest.

What is involved in being a director?

- Directors are expected to attend the regular meetings of the Board. There are usually six of these in the year, on Saturdays, in Edinburgh. Normally the meetings last from 11am to 3pm (lunch is provided and travel expenses paid).
- We are adopting technology to help Directors take part even if they can't physically attend, as well as having an online hub for sharing documents and conversation.
- Directors are sent papers in advance of all meetings and it is expected they will have read these.
- In between meetings, Directors must be prepared to read and comment on draft papers, reports and consultation documents, and offer advice to staff.
- As a Director you will also have responsibility for the Company as a business and so you may be asked to attend meetings or provide other practical support to the organisation. Directors may also be invited to attend conferences and meetings on behalf of Connect.
- Expenses incurred for activities undertaken for Connect are paid, and Directors are asked to prepare a short report on such events for publication on the website.
- Like other organisations, we have office bearers: convener, vice convener, treasurer and secretary. Directors are asked to put themselves forward for these roles, which are important to the running of the organisation.

Directors' activities

- It is important we keep track of who has gone to what meetings, particularly in a representative capacity, so all activities are co-ordinated through our on-line hub. If a Director is invited to attend a meeting, they should make sure the office is aware.
- Directors may be invited to become members of particular committees. Once on such committees, Directors need to respond to the needs of that committee. They have the same sort of loyalty to that committee as they have to us, ie they operate as a committee member, informed by their own experience which includes their role as an SPTC Director.
- Whilst any expenses incurred in carrying out Connect activities will be met by Connect, expenses incurred on behalf of other organisations will not.

Being a Director of a Company Limited by Guarantee

Connect is the trading name of SPTC a charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. The "Company Limited by Guarantee status offers proper protection to Directors and limits their financial liability - and that of all members - to £1.

Moreover, as a Company, we are a legal entity and we are able to trade, buy and sell. However, the Company status puts certain requirements on us in order to comply with company law.

- All Directors have to be registered formally as Directors with Companies House once appointed.
- Directors who are nominated have to stand down after three years, although they can be re-appointed.
- We have to send annual returns to Companies House detailing any changes in the Company and in the Directors.

Being a Charity Trustee

As with company law we also have requirements placed on us in order to comply with charity law.

- As a trustee of a charity, Directors are responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the organisation (and on appointment you will be provided with information detailing a trustee's duties).
- Directors are also Charity trustees and so are registered with the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator – otherwise known as OSCR.

The burden of complying with company and charity law falls largely on the office team but it is important everyone understands that being a Director of SPTC (trading as Connect) is not just an honorary title – it carries with it both statutory and managerial obligations.

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